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ART. VI. — *Rural Architecture : consisting of Classic Dwellings, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Gothic, and Details connected with each of the Orders ; embracing Plans, Elevations, &c.* Designed for the United States of America. By EDWARD SHAW, Architect. Boston : James B. Dow. 1843.

ARCHITECTURE is, beyond question, the oldest and most impressive of the fine arts. In several important points of view, it demands precedence over its more popular accessories, sculpture and painting. Without claiming for it a higher station than will be readily conceded by persons of taste, it may be observed, that these two arts are merely its subsidiary embellishments, and that, in some degree, it is the union and embodiment of both. It ought not, then, to be viewed as less interesting than either. Its various stages of progress furnish abundant opportunity for reflection, and a wide theme for profitable remark. It has been regarded as so direct a means of inspiring the imagination, and creating sublime ideas in the mind, as to be assigned, by ingenious writers, to a high place among those causes which affect the character of an age, and exert a prominent influence over the moral and intellectual habits of a people. It is not, then, from any want of untouched matter, or of fresh subjects for the use of the pen, that so little notice of its present condition among us, has lately appeared in this Journal. On the contrary, there is quite enough in the recent works of our builders to engage the attention of the *amateur*, and demand the animadversions of the critic. We will readily admit, indeed, that the maxim, *nil dictum quod non dictum prius*, should be carefully kept in view while speaking of this polite and liberal art. But this maxim, in architecture as in law, should be applied to general principles, and not to new circumstances, or to novel combinations of facts. Whenever these arise, it is certainly well to improve upon them. We would not attempt to advance new doctrines, or to advocate any startling novelties of opinion ; we would only bring some of those true principles again before the public, which were long since settled and acknowledged by high authority, but which seem in frequent danger, among us, of being overlooked, slighted, or forgotten. We enter upon

this course with the full conviction, that the pursuit of it has always proved beneficial to the art. For the common consent of cultivated minds has fully established this truth, that the system of the ancient architects does not admit of any wide departure from precedent and usage, and if its fundamental principles are in any degree contravened, the certain and speedy consequence will be the degradation and debasement of all its real beauties.

With pleasure, therefore, should we hail even the faint indication of a desire to study the spirit and meaning, instead of reproducing the mere forms and details, of the works of our predecessors. So long as this energy, this sensibility of taste, is wanting, there remains one, at least, of the highest marks of civilization, to which we can have no valid claim. The great test of excellence in design has been repeatedly declared to be this, — that there should be no parts about a building which are not necessary for *convenience, construction, and propriety*, while the neglect of this rule is undoubtedly the immediate cause of all the bad architecture of the present time. Mr. Jefferson is said to have remarked, in reference to the style of building which prevailed in his day, that “the genius of architecture seemed to have shed a peculiar malediction over America.” Little is it to be wondered at, that such should have been the honest conviction of an acute observer, and a man of tolerable taste, at a time when the weak puerilities of Latrobe and his rivals formed the most elevated standard of our architectural excellence. Those flaunting and meretricious edifices, the Capitol at Washington, and the State-house at Boston, stand forth to us as the highest efforts of their composition and invention, while all below them was left to the indiscriminate mercies of the house-joiner and the mason. But if this was the opinion of Mr. Jefferson forty years ago, it cannot be said that, at the present day, there is any reason to reverse the desponding verdict. The architectural faults and follies of his times have indeed passed away ; but we do not hesitate to affirm, that they have been succeeded by others of a different and more deplorable kind. If baldness and want of fancy were the bane of that period, the ostentatious meanness and stilted pretension of our contemporaries are not a whit better. An expression of character and appropriateness might have been wanting in the works of the former builders ; still it was, at least, aimed at

and attempted ; the church was erected in one style, the senate-house in another, the private mansion in another. But with us, such discrimination is rarely shown ; the elevation of the Parthenon, Erectheum, or the Ilissus is the Procestes bed, on which the relentless measure of all our public and private wants and uses is taken, and we are seldom allowed any alternative. Because a *façade* is beautiful in one situation, it is without hesitation adopted in all. A leaf cut out of Stuart's "Athens," that inexhaustible quarry of bad taste, supplies our *architect* with his design and his detail ; he duplicates the columns of the Choragic monument under the crowded portico of the suburban citizen's *box* ; and sacrifices, in every situation, all discrimination and all distinctive character to his imaginary Moloch of classical chasteness. We are almost tempted to suppose, that whenever he sits down to his drawing-board, an attendant stands close at his elbow, to whisper in his ear the dismal motto which, as Montaigne relates, was every day repeated by the pages of Darius ; "Sir, remember the Athenians." So effectually does he remember them, that he finds room in his memory for nothing else. Without columns, he cannot compose any thing ; and with them, he seems to think he cannot fail of being fine. Thus, market-house, cottage, bank, town-hall, law-school, church, brewery, and theatre, with him are all the same. It matters not how widely different their character, how exactly opposite their purpose. His blind admiration for the Grecian colonnade seems to obtrude the object of its bigotry into every situation where its inappropriateness becomes most evident and most ridiculous. Yet we grieve to record, that this servile manner of repetition has established itself in general practice, and finds plenty of advocates among those

" Who talk of principles, but nothing prize,  
And all to one loved folly sacrifice."

Thus the hexastyle portico of Athens is, indeed, reproduced in every locality, and with every variety of material that ingenuity can devise ; but the *fitness of the design to the purpose* for which it is intended, if recognized at all in theory, is much oftener honored in the breach than the observance, in practice.

While, then, these objects of tasteless and ignorant imitation are looking us in the face at every turn, it is scarcely

possible for any one to believe, that our architects possess a particle of that first of all requisites — invention. Is there any proof of its existence among them, when we see the same idea repeated by all, — flimsily disguised, perhaps, but still the same, hashed up and set before us again and again? It does not even appear, that they have often cultivated that lower excellence, which Reynolds allows the young painter sometimes to aim at, — the ability to borrow *with judgment* from the ideas of others, and to use them with grace and fancy. But how could any other result than this be expected? Like those self-satisfied Platonists, who, instead of following out their great master in his search for all truth, are content to stop short exactly where Plato left them, — they seem to have proposed to themselves a definite mark in their art, a limited boundary, beyond which they do not care to go. They are satisfied to overlook the fundamental rules of their profession, because they can earn a cheap and vulgar distinction by disregarding them; by reërecting the eternal temples of the tropics, in timber and plaster imitations on the bleak shores of New England.

“ On which the mazed people gaze and stare,  
And gape therefore.” Sir T. More.

This is their loftiest flight of fancy, — the *ultima Thule* of their imagination. If ever varied, it is only to compose a new order which mocks at the grace of Pericles, — to invent a new arrangement of columns, that ingeniously destroys their propriety and perverts their use, or to place an idolatrous Egyptian gateway as an entrance to a place of Christian sepulture. In short, the locality, destination, and character of a structure appear to be the last considerations which find any place in the basis of their designs, while each new effort, each fresh proceeding, seems only to involve the arts in a deeper and more hopeless degradation.

Perhaps it will not be deemed sufficient to put forth this decided statement, without supporting it by a particular reference to individual examples. The bare assertions of the critic, when unsustained by tangible proof, will always pass for nothing. We heartily agree with Burnet in the determination “to lay aside that lazy and fallacious method of censuring by the lump, and so bring things close to the test of true or false.” *Fraus latet in generalibus.* But we approach this necessary part of our task with reluctance, since the motives of it

are so open to misrepresentation, and so liable to mistake. It has always been the fate of those who set themselves to the reform of any crying abuse, to be rather censured for ill motives than applauded for good ones ; to encounter the apathy of indifference and the opposition of interest, when success would be without any personal advantage, and the result of their labors would prove of far less consequence to themselves, than to those who most strenuously take part against them. We cannot expect, in the present instance, to be exempted from the operation of the general rule. It will not be thought gratuitous, therefore, for us to assert, that we are actuated by no other feeling than a sincere desire to advance the cause of art, and to direct attention to the real merits of other and better days. Nor will it, we hope, be denied, that candor must always drive the impartial critic to a necessary degree of severity, and that in no other way, indeed, can we ever look for any serious reformation. The blunders of ignorance, and the more inexcusable absurdities of whim and caprice, should be plainly pointed out, that they may be ridiculed and avoided for the future. Let us, then, proceed to hold up the torch of truth to several of our costliest edifices, and examine them dispassionately by the light it affords. We will endeavour to keep close to Bishop Taylor's sensible rule, to "report things modestly and temperately, according to the degree of that persuasion which is, or ought to be, begotten by the efficacy of the authority, or the reason inducing thee." It cannot be supposed, that we shall here be unable to maintain the utmost frankness, unmixed either with fear or favor, when we declare, that in many cases we have never heard the architect mentioned at all, and that in none, do we know any thing more of him than barely the name.

The patronage of the general government has, of late, been sadly misapplied in Boston. We are free to go, at once, *in medias res*, and to confess, that the new Custom-house, now in progress of erection, is so incongruous and absurd a pile, that we scarcely know where to begin or where to end our enumeration of its deformities. To avoid the charge of unfairness, however, we will endeavour to arrange its faults under separate and distinct specifications.

1. Its *construction* is eminently defective. The constructive talent of an architect is shown, in a great measure, by

the ratio which is found to exist between the solid points of support, and the covered areas of his building. It is plain, that he who makes so judicious a use of the means allowed him, as to enclose the same space and to provide the same accommodation in the interior, using one half only of the material employed by another, and still preserving the greatest degree of strength that can ever be necessary in the walls of his structure, will be (so to express it) twice as scientific an architect as he who is obliged to make use of double the quantity. We have before us a printed table, in which the skill of Wren, as shown in the Cathedral church of St. Paul, is proved in this manner to be very superior to that of his predecessors in modern times,\* — while Wren, in turn, falls far behind the wonderful geometrical knowledge of the Gothic architects, exemplified in the exquisite vaulted roofs and the airy towers and spires of the Middle Ages. This wise economy of material is regarded by scientific persons, as the first and highest evidence of merit. But let any one, who is competent to judge, examine the *section* of this Custom-house, as drawn and published by the architect himself, and, bearing this rule of estimation in mind, he will not think it too much to say, that the constructive talent shown in it is small indeed. He will see, that there is enough material for at least three buildings of the same size, and will stand astonished at perceiving the amount of room which is lost in the gloomy vestibules, and the stupendous loads of masonry in the interior walls and the squat piers of the lower stories. Why the space thus sacrificed was not used to

\* St. Peter's Church at Rome, St. Mary's at Florence, St. Paul's at London, and St. Geneviève at Paris, are the four largest modern churches of Europe. The relation between their areas and their points of support is shown in the following comparative view :

	Eng. Feet.		Eng. Feet.	Proportion of the latter to the former.
St. Peter's stands on an area of	227,069	of which area its points of support occupy	59,308	0.261
St. Mary's	84,802		17,030	0.201
St. Paul's	84,025		14,311	0.170
St. Geneviève	60,287		9,629	0.154

But the latter building failed so alarmingly, that it can hardly be drawn into a comparison with the three others ; for it was found necessary to increase the points of support under the cupola to a considerable extent. The constructive merit, therefore, of the three first named will be to each other as the numbers 261, 201, and 170, inversely. See Mr. Gwilt's "*Account of St. Paul's Cathedral*," p. 21.

greater advantage, it is, perhaps, impossible to conjecture. The staircases, also, are steep and narrow, and entirely want that dignity which they should possess, as the only means of approach to the great central rotunda. All the stones employed in the building are too large, and though this is effected at an enormously increased cost, it detracts very considerably from the effect of the edifice, by diminishing its apparent scale. Such extravagantly *large stones always destroy proportion* ; they enlarge the *scale* of the masonry, instead of *multiplying the parts*. Hence, a large building constructed in this manner, in effect, is only a smaller one magnified. Such blocks are by no means necessary for strength or durability, for the time-defying structures of the Middle Ages are reared with stones scarcely larger than ordinary bricks. It is said, that there are few stones in York Cathedral, which the workmen could not have carried up in their hands. No such practice prevailed among the sensible Greeks, and it is very justly reprehended in some of the most approved books on the subject.

2. The *plan* of this ill-judged building is that of an hypæthral temple ; but the architect has, in the outset, very gratuitously violated the standard of taste which he himself had set up, by placing his prostyle porticos on the flank of the cell, and composing the principal elevations with engaged, three-quarter columns of Grecian Doric ! Of course, the result is one incongruous mass of jumbled features and discordant characteristics. Nothing, in any style, can be more trivial than the use of engaged columns ; they are to be classed among the worst faults of the ductile school of Palladio, where they are sometimes tolerated for their picturesque effect ; but they must be universally considered as totally opposed to the severity of the Attic orders. “ A column,” says a writer of high authority, “ is an architectural member, which should only be employed when a superincumbent weight is required to be sustained without the intervention of a solid wall ; but the moment a wall is built, the necessity and propriety of columns cease, and engaged columns always produce the effect of having been once detached, and the intermediate spaces blocked up afterwards.” The correctness of this remark will be instantly appreciated by any one who examines the columns of the Custom-house, from any point of view. Their ill effect is materially increased



by the harsh nakedness of the real wall behind them. They have, too, this additional disadvantage, that, together with the overhanging entablature, they very seriously obstruct the light of the windows, and shut in the view obtained from them to a much more confined range of vision. The absolute removal of these excrescences would be the first step necessary to make either front compatible with a truly classical style.

3. Several of the most important *details* are wretched. The windows are mere holes in the wall, not relieved by any architrave mouldings, and even wanting capitals and sills. This is the most effectual method that can be devised, to secure blankness and poverty in a design. It is received as a maxim in architecture, and one which the merest tyro is expected to understand, that the most useful parts of a building are first to be made ornamental, leaving the less useful subordinate to them in style and finish. It is in plain accordance with reason, that those ornaments which bear with them the evidence of utility ought invariably to be applied, before we venture upon such as are purely decorative. When facings to the windows, therefore, are wholly omitted, it is contrary to all principle to adorn any part of the elevation with columns, or even pilasters ; for windows are, first of all, essential to the use of the building to which they belong. Yet the blank walls, thus unrelieved by any agreeable projections, are here decked out with all the pomp of fluted columns, entablature, and pediment. These offensive inequalities of taste betray very little real notion of propriety, and should have been better considered of in so large and expensive a structure.

The elevated stylobate, on which the columns are raised, is full of apertures to give light and entrance to the basement. We will attempt no criticism upon this expedient ; it is equally beyond the reach of reasoning, irony, and invective. It may be said, that these openings were indispensable for convenience. Admit it ; but the architect must have known all this beforehand. Why, then, did he adopt a style, the rigid severity of which, above all others, is so foreign to these fantastic tricks ? Throughout the whole, as it is, he has been continually hampered by his design.

“ As a dog, committed close  
For some offence, by chance breaks loose,  
And quits his clog ; — but all in vain,  
He still draws after him his chain.”

*Hudibras.*

It compelled him to add a cyma to the proper entablature, to remove the metopes from the frieze, and substitute glazed windows between the triglyphs, opening into the space behind the cornice. Though it should now be futile to censure these barbarisms, we deem it a duty thus openly to bear our testimony against them. "The public at large," observes the acute Dr. McCulloch, "has a claim over the architecture of a country. It is common property, inasmuch as it involves the national taste and character; and no man has a right to pass himself and his own barbarous inventions as a national taste, or to hand down to posterity his own ignorance and disgrace to be a satire and libel on the knowledge and taste of his age." But what idea will posterity be likely to form of the government architects of the nineteenth century, or of the government commissioners, who could abet such reckless squandering?

We have thought it expedient thus to go through with this structure, step by step, and to leave no serious error in it unnoticed, because it is a fair type of the whole class of modern Grecian edifices, and the solecisms upon which we have here animadverted are observable in nearly all. It is, also, without doubt, one of the most expensive undertakings ever attempted in Boston. More than eight hundred thousand dollars have not been sufficient to raise it to a proper height to receive the *dome*, — its last and crowning absurdity. By what precedent, what reason, or what rule of taste, a Doric temple is bestridden in such a way, must for ever lie beyond the comprehension of ordinary individuals; while the additional sums of money, which will be needed to complete it, may justly be considered a problem to tax the ingenious calculations of the economist to their utmost limit. After all this vast outlay, it is confidently asserted by practical judges, that the interior will never afford the requisite accommodation for the revenue offices, in a large and rapidly increasing metropolis. Its aspect, to say the least, is sufficiently gloomy and forbidding; the sullen "caves of Domdaniel" could scarcely inspire more cheerless emotions; and we question if the ill-digested arrangement of the principal apartments will not prove very inconvenient for the transaction of the business. What might have been effected, had the architect been willing to shake off the arbitrary and whimsical restrictions with which he has fettered

himself, we will not now venture to suggest. But in the present edifice, at least, we may look in vain for any confirmation of the sentiment of Cowper, that

“ Art thrives most  
Where commerce has enriched the busy coast :  
He catches all improvements in their flight,  
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,  
Imports what others have invented well,  
And stirs his own to match them, or excel.”

The High School, erected in Bedford street during the past year, is another exemplar of the worst taste. Though it presents only one front to the eye, that towards the street, on which the architect has bestowed all the pretension of the building, it yet contains, in that one, nearly as many faults as it is possible, by any ingenuity, to collect in so small a space. The lower story is in rusticated work, which, when properly executed, is susceptible of a high degree of appropriate effect. But that which is here employed is copied from the manner of the vicious French school, — consisting only of shallow horizontal stripes, as meagre and unmeaning as they are offensively monotonous. They really contribute nothing towards the intended expression of solidity, having rather the effect of weak places in the masonry. The simple introduction of vertical joints, with a different tooling of the raised surface, admitting, as it does, great diversity of arrangement and distribution, would have produced a very different result, and changed the whole character of the basement, from utter tastelessness to characteristic and pleasing beauty. This edifice is also without any door in the front, so that all visible means of obtaining entrance to it are entirely wanting. Those who watched the progress of its erection may indeed know, that the doors are constructed in the sides ; but to one who sees it for the first time, there is no evidence of any such fact ; and we can conceive, that an intelligent foreigner would be sadly puzzled to find his way into the apparently impregnable stronghold.

“ Scamozzi,” observes Sir William Chambers, “ compares the door to the mouth of an animal, and as nature,” says he, “ has placed the one in the middle of the face, so the architect ought to place the other *in the middle of the front of the edifice* ; that being the most noble situation, the most majestic and convenient.” But when it is left out of the design altogether, it is almost useless to pass a censure

upon an example of so low a character. If an increased convenience in the *plan* be assigned as the reason for this strange proceeding, we are satisfied, that every person of common discernment will peremptorily disallow it. A considerable degree of inconvenience should be submitted to, before such a gross violation of rule is committed. Nor would this result have been inevitable ; for, by a little painstaking and contrivance, the architect might have avoided any ill arrangement of the interior. Such flimsy excuses are becoming by far too common. “ When the Devil can’t swim,” says the old proverb, “ he always lays the fault on the water.” It is, at the best, but a very feeble apology for ignorance ; and we insist, that the door should in all cases be placed in the principal front, though it only find a place in one corner of it, as in Mr. Barry’s exquisite Traveller’s Club House. Thus, the architect, though unable to conform exactly to recognized principles, shows, at least, that he entertains some little respect for them.

“ Si

Non videtur meruisse laudem, culpâ caruisse.”

The windows of the principal floor are adorned with handsome facings ; but this species of decoration is wholly omitted in the next, or highest story. We are presented, therefore, with a row of plain apertures, over windows properly executed in themselves, but thus thrown wholly out of keeping, and appearing quite foreign to the taste displayed in all the rest of the weak composition to which they are attached. A mixture of apertures with and without dressings, in the same *façade*, is one of the most glaring solecisms that can be committed. These blunders, however, are even surpassed by the highly original pediment, finished, as it is, in bold defiance of every recognized principle of building, and capping this small front with a perfect climax of absurdity. There is no horizontal entablature, but in its place, a profuse display of costly flourishes in granite, overhung by a bold, raking cornice, that appears in no way improved by its most unjustifiable divorce from its horizontal companion. In short, we believe, that there are very few offences, that can be committed against the simplest *principia* of architecture, which have been overlooked, or left out of this design, — so that it seems to have been composed, not with any intention of conforming to rules, but by way of a pleasant defiance to all of

them. Yet all the mouldings employed are savagely Grecian in profile, and even the contraction of the architraves to the windows is rigorously copied from Athenian examples. Where this excess of pretension exists on the one hand, it is natural to expect some little excellence of performance on the other ; but we fear it will be found, that the present age stands not more apart from all others for the vain boasts of its architecture, than for its real and immeasurable inferiority. We have abundant reason to cry out against the defects of the prevailing system, when we find its consequent evils thus coming home upon ourselves.

The front of the Tremont theatre was noticed in a former number of this Journal,\* as one of the best proportioned and most agreeable structures in Boston. But since the publication of the article referred to, it has undergone a fearful change. The rusticated arcade of the lower story has been destroyed, the arched openings being filled in with long, straight blocks of stone, and the solid wall which flanked them, at the extremities of the *façade*, receiving a similar kind of treatment. This was done to adapt them to shop fronts, while the next or principal story has fared, if possible, somewhat worse. From the niches, where stood the statues of the tragic and comic Muses, statues, pedestals, and wall, have alike been pulled away, and the circular-headed spaces filled up with flaring glazed windows, divided into two lights by a floor cutting them across the middle. It can be imagined, how well these assimilate with the handsome, square-headed windows, which open in the central intercolumns. Five recessed panels next above these have also been opened and glazed, making a kind of *mezzanine* story, which could nowhere be more unsightly than in its present situation. The granite front, having begun to acquire a few picturesque tints from the action of the weather, has been scrubbed, and hammered, and pointed, until it looks like a staring geometrical drawing in an architect's portfolio. The interior has been barbarized into a lath and plaster hybrid of church and concert-hall,—an ingenious reconciliation of God and Mammon which it remained for the liberal and enlightened nineteenth century to discover. The superb Corinthian columns, which formerly adorned the

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\* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLIII., p. 364.

proscenium, and which shone with every grace that form and color could impart, have been pulled down, and wantonly sacrificed "for a song" at a public auction. Instead of the tasteful and even elegant interior, which it formerly exhibited, and of which every Bostonian had reason to be proud, a desolate and monotonous expanse of dirty white is now spread before the eye, — small cast-iron props sustaining enormous galleries, and bare, unpainted pine supplanting all the former attractions of drapery and gilding. "Patience," exclaimed old Sir Henry Lee, "is a good nag, but she will bolt sometimes;" and we must take the license to confess, that we have scarcely any terms in which adequately to speak our idea of this Vandalic spoliation.

The Exchange, in State street, has many faults, with very few real beauties to counterbalance them. The proportions of the front are, indeed, tolerably good, and there is some dignity of effect produced by the breadth and regularity of its shadows. But the capitals of the great pilasters are bald and trivial, and the entablature must be objected to, as far too plain for the somewhat ornate character of the building. It is a grand mistake with our modern Grecian imitators, that they expend their whole means upon the columnar arrangement, to the neglect of all the other parts which require an equal attention. The *frieze* is almost universally left quite plain, however high a degree of embellishment is bestowed upon the lower members of the order. The columns, according to the present practice, predominate too obtrusively, and their capitals often appear cumbrous with enrichment, while the superior entablature is nude and insignificant. This produces a sad poverty of effect, inverting the natural order of enrichment, and leaving a disagreeable *hiatus* in the propriety of the whole design. Among the Greeks, the frieze was rarely without the highest decoration that sculpture could bestow; the metopes of the Parthenon were adorned with the master-pieces of Phidias, and the tympanum of the pediment was crowded with the exquisitely sculptured ideals of their whole mythology. The temple of Minerva was only the *frame* to the Elgin marbles. Where every thing of this kind is wanting, it will always be noticed, that there is an utter absence of the richness which belongs to the upper line of the structure. If continued sculpture be rejected, on account of its increased expense,

there should, at least, be a plenty of ornament of some other kind. Rich voluted scrolls, and other designs of the same character, might be introduced with great beauty of effect, and would tend, in a great degree, to produce that harmony and consistency of embellishment, which is the highest charm of a building, and which convinces the spectator, that one predominating principle has regulated the whole design. There is nothing, in architecture, worse than tasteless misapplication; it is wearing the second-hand clothes, and not the *garb* of the ancients; it has the effect of bringing the resources of modern builders into the humiliating position of a kind of architectural Brattle street. If it be received as an important truth, that nothing, however subordinate in itself, is to be passed over without its due share of attention, it certainly must be allowed that the entablature, the highest and most imposing member of the superstructure, should be carefully studied with reference to its effect upon the whole. "If you cannot be consistent in decoration," says an eminent critic, "at least be consistent in the omission of it, and do not seem even to *aim* at what you can only imperfectly accomplish. If circumstances prevent you from producing a finished picture, do not work up parts, here and there, while others are merely sketched in; in a word, attend to *keeping*."

So far, however, as ornamental sculpture appears upon this front at all, like Obadiah, "it had better been a league off." Who can look without laughing at the allegorical display over the front entrance, where every separate emblem of commerce is cut to a scale of its own, and grouped in a style that puts Hogarth's perspective to the blush; the "almighty dollar" expanded to the size of a dinner plate; the mast of a merchantman shrunk to the dimensions of a walking cane; and "the great globe itself" hardly emulating in size the proportions of a portly pumpkin? There is no wonder, that this effort of native design, when first elevated to its place, attracted such crowds of delighted lookers on. The architect must, in sooth, be a superstitious mortal, who could put his faith in such an uncouth enormity.

The great hall of the interior, with its flat dome, its bright scagliola columns, its composed capitals, its staring white walls, and its profusion of plaster ornaments, now cracked in every direction, presents a tawdry and miserable failure.

Such things as these are not architecture, but frippery. They always mark the composition of one who goes pompously to work, after other people's ideas, without possessing enough of his own to arrange them ; "perpetually misquoting and misapplying his authorities, and sneaking about in his stolen peacock's feathers, in the most unpeacock-like manner imaginable."

Under the same category with the foregoing, would we include the Custom-house at New York, and the Girard college at Philadelphia. It ought by this time to have been discovered, that a Greek temple and a sash-windowed house of three stories are ill reconciled to each other in the same edifice. The Grecian style scarcely affords a precedent for any accommodation to the wants or uses of our own time ; least of all, is it to be chosen in a building where the windows constantly occur in the different floors, and become so numerous as to influence the whole composition, and stamp it with a character entirely at variance with the expression professedly attempted in the elevations. "It is hardly possible," says Mr. Leeds, "to reconcile the *columnar* with the *fenestral* character ; since, at the best, a certain *tertium quid* will be the result, — an Italianized Grecian, or a Grecianized Italian design." Doric and plate-glass have a natural antipathy, which no ingenuity can overcome ; chimney pots certainly rise above a pediment with a less pleasing effect than the classical *acroteria* ; and the necessary offices can never be added, either to the right or the left, without becoming in themselves a grievous sin against architectural fitness, and producing a most uneven and discordant effect upon the whole.

We proceed to the examination of one other example in support of our preliminary remarks. The church in Somerset place, which has been recently completed, has called forth several unfavorable notices in one of the most influential public journals of the day, and appears to be regarded, not without reason, as a very faulty though pretending edifice. The front is, in fact, a *mask* only, built with finished and costly material, and carried up to quite an elevated height, having a *façade* of very considerable architectural pretension, with a true Attic pitch of roof, and containing no other apertures throughout its whole extent than the three doors of entrance. But the side elevations must be admitted



to present a woful contrast to the assumed elegance of the front. Roughly and coarsely built, of very inferior material, without one particle of ornament, or even of customary finish, they absolutely fall below the style of construction that is adopted in the most common warehouses, machine-shops, and founderies in the suburbs and low outskirts of the city. On the east side, the Church is closely hemmed in by a row of handsome dwelling-houses ; but even this does not prevent the shallow facing of stone from obtruding itself upon the eye, as, scarcely three inches round the corner, it is backed up with the coarse brick-work of which we have spoken ; while, on the west side, the whole is still open to a public street, presenting an aspect of architectural hideousness, that is certainly unsurpassed by any similar exhibition we have ever noticed. The observations of Mr. Pugin upon this manner of church building are so exactly appropriate in this connexion, and so fully express the ideas which we would convey, that we adopt them with a very hearty pleasure. These forcible remarks occur in his late work, “ The true Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture, set forth in Two Lectures ” ; a book which claims the highest consideration for the keen discrimination, the honest severity, and the thorough understanding of the subject, which it everywhere exhibits.

“ A room full of seats at the least possible cost is the present idea of a church ; and, if ornament is indulged in, it is a mere screen to catch the eye of the passer by, which is a most contemptible deception to hide the meanness of the real building. How often do we see a front gable carried up to a respectable pitch, and we might naturally infer that this is the termination, both as regards height and form, of the actual roof ; but on turning the corner, we soon perceive that it is a mere wall, cramped to hold it in its position, and that it conceals a very meeting-house behind, with a flat roof, and low, thin walls, perforated by mean apertures, and without a single feature or detail to carry out the appearance it assumed toward the street. The severity of Christian architecture is opposed to all this deception. We should never make a building erected to God appear better than it really is, by artificial means. These are showy, worldly expedients, adapted only for those who live by splendid deception. Yet, in these times, *all that does not catch the eye is neglected*. A rich looking antependium often conceals rough materials, a depository for candle-ends and an accumula-

tion of dirt, which are allowed to remain, simply because they are out of sight. All plaster, cast-iron, and composition ornaments, painted like stone or oak, are mere impositions, and although very suitable for a tea-garden, are utterly unworthy of a sacred edifice. "*Omne secundum ordinem, et honeste fiat.*" Let every man build to God according to his means, but not practise showy deceptions; better is it to do a little substantially, and consistently with truth than to produce a great but fictitious effect. Hence, the rubble wall and oaken rafter of antiquity yet impress the mind with feelings of reverent awe, which never could be produced by the cement and plaster imitations of elaborate tracery, and the florid designs which, in these times, are stuck about our mimic churches in disgusting profusion."\*

We have thus endeavoured to fortify ourselves upon the broad ground we assumed in the outset, and to give a reason for the decided opinions to which we shall always adhere. But unlike the fat knight of Eastcheap, we give it only "upon compulsion." We allude to existing examples only because it is necessary, while we sincerely deplore the necessity that compels us thus to speak. We would not willingly detract from any merit which the buildings we have criticized may be found to possess; far less would we seek to undervalue the professional reputation of their architects beyond that point to which their own works condemn them. Toward each of these gentlemen, indeed, we feel every inclination to observe the "Complete Angler's" advice as to impaling the minnow; to "treat him tenderly, as though you loved him." There is here no possible motive for that undue severity, which defeats its own object, and stupidly overshoots the mark at which it attempts to aim. But Sir John Harrington has wisely told us, that

"It is an act of virtue and of piety  
To warn men of their sins in every sort;"

and these gentlemen will do well to recollect, that, if they have chosen to accept the emolument of such works as they have given to the world, they must also be content to bear the odium which of right belongs to them.

We trust, then, it will be conceded, that we are no dogmatists in the opinions we have now expressed. We have only gone about to try the architecture of our times by the

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\* Pugin's *Christian Architecture*.

standard of received maxims, which, as it has been seen, are often quoted, *ipsissimis verbis*, from the most distinguished authorities. We think there can be little doubt, that the examination has been fairly conducted. And the impression which it leaves on the mind, only strengthens us in the views we have gradually been led to adopt, from the frequent and careful reading of the most pains-taking architectural criticism of the day. We are firm in the belief, that the introduction of Grecian architecture among us has been a great mistake. Its edifices belong to another climate ; they are the legitimate offspring of a remote age, an antagonistic religion, an obsolete form of government, and a widely different state of society from our own. With us they have no concern. As well might the stately, statue-like tragedies of Euripides be expected to supplant, on our modern stage, the glowing pictures of Shakspeare and Otway. Beautiful as may be the forms which this pure style assumed, when used by its original authors, — chaste and elegant as are the Parian columns that lie scattered “on Sunium’s marbled steep,” — majestic as appears the frowning temple of Jupiter, or the elegant shrine of the guardian goddess of Athens, standing in their sublime solitude on the hills of Attica, we must still conclude, that the forms and uses to which it was then applied are far too few to satisfy the numerous and complex demands of modern art. It has, indeed, been studied with devoted diligence, and defended by its advocates with an almost Quixotic zeal. It has been declared to possess every excellence, and to combine every beauty. But whatever may be thought or said of it, *in the abstract*, we only see that it has, so far, failed to produce among us a single example that does not contradict and stultify itself repeatedly, upon the most cursory reference to the principles of its ancient prototypes. It must certainly be admitted to be deficient in variety. Originally exhibited under only one form, it is unfair to expect that it can be pressed arbitrarily into the service of all. It cannot be moulded to every purpose, nor can we engraft upon it, with impunity, whatever features our own occasions may happen to call for ; whether they are provided for or not, in the limited theory of their originals. It is, therefore, by no means an easy task, in reducing the system of the Greeks to modern practice, to avoid even the most offensive and glaring inconsistencies ; to do so will yet

require a degree of inventive genius, that can harmonize contradictions and reconcile impossibilities ; that can go beyond the exact calculations of the ancients in accomplishing a certain proposed effect, and recast every part with reference to a new and different whole.

“If, after so long a trial of it,” observes Mr. Leeds, “it be found utterly incapable of giving us any thing much better or more consistent than has hitherto been produced, and that we have already exhausted its powers of design, and the combinations it admits of, we have no very great reason to be surprised, if it should now be laid aside for a style, which not only readily adapts itself to our mode of building, but derives much of its character and effect from features for which ancient architecture makes no provision, or, rather, obstinately rejects.”

If, however, Grecian architecture, from its marked unfitness for our wants and uses, is ever to be generally laid aside, what is there, it may be asked, that can be proposed as a substitute for it, at least in secular edifices ? In reply, we confess that there might, indeed, be few opportunities among us for developing the powers of the highest style which flourished after the revival of letters, — the style of Bramante, of Palladio, and of Michael Angelo ; but we should, on that account, be the more desirous to see some of them well improved. Introduced into England by the great master Inigo Jones, this fine manner was followed by Wren, Vanbrugh, Kent, and his patron, the accomplished Earl of Burlington, and exhibits itself in their works at Whitehall, and at Coleshill, in Berkshire, at St. Paul’s Cathedral, at Blenheim, Chatsworth, and Castle Howard, and in the elegant front of Lord Burlington’s own town mansion. Horace Walpole gives his impressions of the last named edifice in an account, which Mr. Britton calls “speaking of it in rapturous terms.”

“As we have few samples of architecture more antique,” says he, “and more imposing than that colonnade, I cannot help mentioning the effect it had on myself. I had not only never seen it, but had never heard of it, at least with any attention, when, soon after my return from Italy, I was invited to a ball at Burlington House. As I passed under the gate by night, it could not strike me. At daybreak, looking out of the window to see the sun rise, I was surprised with the vision of the colonnade that fronted me. It seemed one of those edifices in fairy tales that are raised by Genii in a night’s time.”

All the splendid piles to which we have alluded, are adorned with columns, in their various elevations, but are built to so extensive a scale, that their columns lose the insipid appearance of being employed as a means of decoration alone, which is often the case in the works of Palladio and his imitators. The superb fronts of Castle Howard, in particular, verify the truth of this remark. But the highest recommendation of the Italian style, and that for which we think it specially deserving of attention, is this ; that although it does not reject the application of porticos and columnar supports, a higher degree of expression and dignity is often to be obtained without them. The exquisite productions of Baldassare Peruzzi, of Francesco di Giorgio, and their pupils, afford us models for enthusiastic imitation. This manner is sometimes termed the *palazzo* style, — the style invented and adopted by masters who were painters as well as architects, — who judged of their *façades*, masses, and returns by their effect upon the eye, before reducing them to a pedantic ordeal of modules. The Palazzi Riccardi, Pandolfini, Strozzi, and Gondi at Florence, — the renowned Farnese, the splendid Massimi, at Rome, and the Piccolomini, at Siena, display a true greatness of manner, that belongs to all the productions of the *acme* of Italian art, — every member and portion of the detail being strictly analogous to the style and character of the building, and kept subservient to the feeling embodied in the whole. In England, two very striking examples have been erected within a few years by Mr. Charles Barry, the successful candidate in the competition for the New Houses of Parliament, and who stands, almost by acclamation, at the head of the British school of architecture. The Traveller's Club House, first, and the Reform Club House, built soon afterwards, have given very happy evidence of his peculiar and versatile talent. The eminent appropriateness, and the picturesque and striking beauty, of the manner which he had chosen, have, beyond question, greatly conduced to form a growing taste for the *palazzo* style among the architects of "the great metropolis." The effect of this will be seen and felt for many years in the street architecture of London. We should be happy, were we able to indulge the hope, that the example of a beautiful villa, erected in Brookline, during the past year, would exert an equally favorable influence upon the neglected

domestic architecture of our own country. But the Grecian temple presses too heavily on the imagination of our professional men, to be thrown off so easily.

The Grecian temple consists of a colonnade, or exterior row of pillars surrounding the whole edifice, and on which the roof mainly depends for support. The *cell*, or enclosed portion of the building, is formed by a plain wall behind, into which no windows should open, and which was never designed either for habitation, for converse, or for congregational worship. It was entirely an inferior consideration among the Greeks, who lived, acted, and worshipped in the open air, and under the broader canopy of their cloudless sky. But with us, how different a manner of construction is pointed out by the plain necessity of the case. We require, for the greater part of the time, to be within our edifices, and not on the outside of them. We find it convenient to have our roof rest on the walls, instead of placing a superfluous row of piers beyond ; and in those walls, we must have apertures to provide us with air, light, and entrance. Construct these apertures, remove the colonnade, and place the *cornicione* upon the wall itself, and we then have the groundwork of an Italian building, which, in all its parts, is strictly conformable to the demands of common sense, and is susceptible of being so elaborated as to satisfy the highest idea of beauty.

The employment of the Grecian style obliges us, also, to banish the very idea of spires and steeples. These characteristic appendages are certainly, in themselves, very ornamental, while pointing silently to heaven, they form the outward and striking evidences of the Christianity of a people. But if the present state of things continue, they must be tacitly surrendered, and the oblong, four-sided, prostyle temple become the stereotyped pattern of design. This is plainly the deplorable crisis to which we seem to be approaching, and against which we would lift up a voice of earnest remonstrance. Perhaps, however, when the flood is at its height, it will turn of its own accord. We should not be greatly surprised at a sudden reaction. "Human nature," said Martin Luther, "is like a drunken trooper on horseback, for if you set it up on one side, down it falls on the other" ; and we are already encouraged, by certain ominous symptoms, to think it possible, that even the heaviness of

our Hellenic stone-masons may, at some time or other, encounter a serious obstacle to its complacent equipoise.

We are not, however, without some *ante-Revolutionary* edifices in Boston, which do honor to the talent of their architects, and to the liberal taste of those who employed them. It is, indeed, a sad truth, that if we look about us for any thing correct or pleasing, we do not find it so much in the works of our own time, as in those which were executed sixty or eighty years ago. One of these, the old King's Chapel in Tremont street, has often been made the subject of judicious admiration. If the exterior be bare of ornament, at any rate, it makes no pretension to any other character ; it is a plain, solid, well jointed piece of mason-work, which is respectable for its sober unity of expression, and venerable, at least in our young country, from the weather stains which have gathered upon it for nearly a hundred years. In its exterior form and character, it is almost exactly like the London churches erected at the same period, — such a one as Hawksmoor, Gibbs, or Kent would have been very likely to design. Its plan is that of a simple oblong building, with a semi-elliptical recess for the chancel, at the eastern end, and having a heavy, square tower, at the opposite front. The tower is surrounded on three sides with a plain portico, which we wish had been omitted. The order displayed in it is the Roman Ionic, and the details are executed in a correct and pleasing manner. The windows in the lower row are small, and nearly square, covered with a low, flat arch, and deeply recessed in the wall. In the next, or gallery story, they are still of the same width, but nearly twice as high, and finished with semi-circular arches, the substantial solidity of which would be aped in vain by the bricks, and cements, and compositions of our gaudy contemporaries. A bold, projecting cornice crowns the whole, relieved with modillions on its lower surface, but appearing perfectly in keeping with the main idea. There is nothing particularly handsome in all this, but it is the *sentiment* shown in it which we so much admire, — an utter absence of clap-trap and pretension, — a stern disclaimer of wishing to appear any thing more than it really is, — a plain rejection of extraneous and adscititious fictions. We defy any man of true taste to look at it in this light, for a moment, and then wish to see it stuck over with dapper shreds and patches of

Grecian ornament. But though the exterior is so designedly unpretending, the architect has bestowed a much higher, yet equally consistent, degree of finish upon the interior. The nave, or body, of the church is separated from the aisles by very elegant Corinthian columns, standing in couples, and raised upon bases a little above the height of the pews. We very willingly confess, that we do not admire the manner in which the entablature of these columns is cut up to receive the arches of the ceiling. It is a serious blemish, arising from the construction of the roof, and seems to be imitated from what has always been considered a fault in the celebrated church of *St. Martin in the Fields*. The necessity of a similar arrangement was very ingeniously avoided by Wren, in his beautiful church of *St. James, Westminster*, the roof of which is a fine specimen of economic carpentry, and should have been more familiar to the architect of our *chapel*. But the effect of this interior is so solemn and imposing, that we would willingly forget this slight license. There is no other church in Boston, where "the dim, religious light," so conducive to a devotional frame of mind, is admitted with such judicious and sparing economy, — the decent pulpit, desk, and clerk's desk standing apart from the chancel, — the antique altar-piece, with the Prayer, the Belief, and the "good commandments ten," — the marble monuments that occupy the centre of the wide piers, and the deep, quiet organ-loft at the western end, at once bespeak the distinctive character of a church, and make us sensible that "we cannot desecrate it, even in thought." It has the air, neither of a disguised ball-room, nor a travestied theatre ; herein lies its great contrast to the churches of our own time ; and it will not be thought a hasty or unadvised assertion, when we say, that there are few of these, that do not strongly resemble either the one or the other.

There is another interior, belonging to the same style and period, which deserves a high degree of admiration. It will scarcely be conceived, that the dingy and ill-shaped pile of brick, on the east side of Brattle square, conceals one of the most highly finished, elegant, and solemn interiors in the country. Perhaps the inferiority of the situation was the reason for so entirely neglecting its external appearance, which certainly gives promise of any thing else than the remarkable view obtained on entering, and disposes the unin-



tiated visiter to expect so little, that he can scarcely fail of experiencing the most agreeable disappointment. The exterior of this old church is of brick, painted a dull lead color, except the rusticated quoins, and key-stones, which are of dark brown freestone. The tower is low and square, rising only one story above the roof of the building, and having a circular-headed opening in each of its sides, to form a belfry for a bell of great size and very powerful tone. But if the exterior be so grim and forbidding as to repel examination, the charming interior, on the contrary, will amply repay it. It is divided transversely, by a row of four Corinthian columns, into a centre and two side aisles; the columns are deeply fluted, and adorned with the highest degree of embellishment belonging to the Roman form of this rich order. The ornate variety of the style of art which prevailed in ancient Rome at the time of the erection of that magnificent structure, the temple of Jupiter Stator, and which was closely followed in the works of the English architects at the beginning of the last century, seems to us to be much better suited to the purposes of modern interiors, than the exact and rigid proportions of those more precise examples which the present fashion almost exclusively copies. At all events, it has been fully adopted, with a very fortunate effect, in the interior under consideration. In many of its features, it reminds us strongly of the parish church of *St. Mary, Woolnoth*, in London, — an edifice described by Mr. Gwilt, as full of “such exquisite beauties, that it is irksome to dwell on its few and trifling faults.” We wish that we had access to any measurements of its dimensions, in order to ascertain how far the architect has deviated from the sesquilateral proportion so carefully adhered to by Wren, and which produces the harmony and enchanting effect so frequently observed in the interiors of that great master. It appears, however, so far as it can be judged by the eye alone, to be designed, though not after Wren’s rule, yet with a great degree of uniformity and attention to geometrical arrangement. It should not remain unvisited by any one who has a mind to see how architecture was practised in Boston at a time when the wealth of the city was not great, and, as might be supposed, its actual means of refinement were in a far less advanced state than at present. It would certainly be

more gratifying to us, could we honestly give our opinion, that art had been a decided gainer by the change.

The little episcopal church at Cambridge was erected not far from the same period, being finished in the year 1760. It is, or rather *was*, for the interior went through the ordeal of *church-wardenizing* not long ago, a model of beauty and propriety in all its parts. No one can fail to observe the happy effect of its exterior proportions, and the dignity it acquires from the deep cornice with which it is finished. On each side elevation are five long, circular-headed windows, surrounded with a bold moulding, ending in a return, and imparting a great degree of relief to the apertures which it decorates. The tower is singularly modest and charming, with not one half the show, but infinitely more than the merit, of its opposite neighbour. The effect of the interior, though somewhat injured by alterations, is yet very pleasing. There is no doubt, that the architect intended to have made the entablature continuous, instead of carrying it up in a square mass over every single column ; but a want of the necessary funds is said to have prevented its completion. The organ gallery, and the three doors under it, are designed in fine taste ; the order throughout the whole interior being the bold and graceful Roman Ionic, with its angular volutes and delicately finished modillions. The aspect of the church is much impaired by the situation of the painted altar-piece, which was brought from the old Trinity church in Boston, when that building was taken down, and has been stuck up in its present situation, at the wrong end of the church, without any regard to propriety or effect. The arrangement of the pulpit, desk, and pews was formerly much more in keeping than at present, the pulpit standing forward into the nave, as at the King's Chapel ; but it is now very improperly removed back, so as only to be reached by an inconvenient circuit inside the altar railing.

It is a pity, that any circumstances should intervene, to impair the pleasing impression which the architecture of this beautiful little church is calculated to convey. But pleasing as it is, it is quite evident, that the example set forth in its design has been almost without any effect upon the public taste. It appears to have been imitated only in a single instance, — a church in the same town, which stands a little

to the left, as we enter by the high road from Boston. But the alterations made in the copy cannot be viewed as improvements upon the original. The elegant simplicity of the one becomes only baldness in the other, which, however, is certainly a much prettier church than many others we could mention in its vicinity. It is strange, that the purity and harmony of character observable in the older church should generally have been so feebly appreciated, and, in this case, so poorly copied. But where we find one architect who is willing to acknowledge its merit, there are many who would not rest satisfied, till it had been *improved* out of all its real beauties. Few can hope to equal the elegance of this example, and, look about us where we will, we do not find that any one has, as yet, been able to surpass it. Their works want that piquant but proper originality, which this design exhibits.

“The architect,” observes Mr. Loudon, “to whom architecture is not an art of imagination as well as an art of reason, can never, by any possibility, rise above the rank of an imitative builder. He may rear edifices of great strength, solidity, and durability, very fitly arranged for the purposes for which they are built, and very correct in their architectural details; but he will never be able to produce a structure in which novelty and originality are combined with the other requisites of excellence; or, when placed in a situation where rules no longer apply, to rise superior to obstacles which would be reckoned insurmountable by ordinary minds, and thus out of difficulties to start beauties. This can be done alone by the architect of imagination, and it is only such an architect that is entitled to be considered as an artist possessing the powers of invention, or genius.”

We cannot but repeat here the wish expressed on a former occasion, that the faultless proportions of the Cambridge church may yet be imitated and preserved in stone. We often tremble for the safety of so beautiful a model, exposed to all the accidents of decay and of fire, to which a wooden building is always liable.

Coming down to a somewhat later period, we find in this vicinity several steeples and spires, which we cannot allow to pass without some degree of commendation. First among these, for elegance of contour and pleasing disposition of its parts, we are inclined to place the steeple of the octagonal church in Summer street. Upon the body of the church

itself, we should only waste time in bestowing any criticism at all. But above the portico, we conceive the steeple to possess a great share of merit. The manner in which it diminishes in the various stories, and changes from a square to a circular, and then to an octagonal, plan, is certainly very agreeable to the eye. Upon a broad square stylobate, next above the roof, it rises in three separate divisions, adorned with columns at the breaks, and containing arched windows in the principal sides. These stories, and the elevated bases on which they rest, are very symmetrically proportioned to each other, and all the main points of which they are composed are kept strictly within the line of an imaginary pyramid; while the angles are occupied with ornamental vases, of pleasing figure, which have been judiciously introduced, to fill up the outline of the corners, and conduce to the regularity of its conical form. To the strict observance of this valuable idea, the architect is mainly indebted for his success. Notwithstanding occasional improprieties of detail, (such as the introduction of balusters, where sunken panels would have been more appropriate,) yet, considering it as a mass, and with regard to its graceful and airy effect, we cannot hesitate to assign a higher rank to it than to any specimen of the kind which we are now so fortunate as to possess. To combine lightness and harmony in such a work must always be a difficult task. The lofty magnificence and the exuberant fancy of the pointed style are denied to a structure, that is to be made up only of distinct and different portions of architectural detail. The classic orders abound in horizontal lines and shadows, and naturally form themselves into a very different species of combinations. In fact, they have no affinity whatever to steeple-like erections, and the architect who thus employs them will vainly endeavour to rival the beauty of that style, to which these striking appendages more properly belong.

The steeple of the church in Hollis street, though it has some good points, is yet very faulty from the fact that it diminishes in a broken and irregular manner. The columns of the upper story, which is next below the springing of the spire, have, at a little distance, the effect of a temporary staging placed round the body of the steeple. The pyramidal outline has not been attended to at all, and the natural consequence is, an utter want of lightness and of continuity

of effect. Its elevation from the ground is very considerable, and it forms quite a conspicuous object in all the distant views of the city. The spire in Park street is also very lofty and imposing, and is said to have been mainly copied from one of Gibbs's published designs. The *mannerisms* observable in its construction seem to give some support to the suggestion. As a whole, it makes quite a showy figure, and forms an agreeable architectural object in a general view of the Common; but its different portions will not well bear the test of a closer inspection. The steeples of St. Paul's and St. John's churches, in New York, are also not unfavorable examples of this kind of structure. They are attached to buildings which display a Roman order, and are not much inferior in design to those of the same style to be met with abroad. They were erected forty or fifty years ago. But nearly all our recent churches, being designed after Grecian models, are destitute of steeples, which, as we have before remarked, are so much at variance with that manner of building, that it would be the height of impropriety to introduce them.

Having thus considered the relative merits of those edifices in our neighbourhood, which are imitated from the antique specimens of Greece and Rome, it will perhaps be expected, that we next pass to an examination of the Gothic structures that have been erected in the United States within the last few years. In these, we rejoice to perceive an increased knowledge, and a growing taste. There are few things in architecture, that could hold out less promise of excellence, than the old Trinity church and the Masonic Hall, in New-York, and the Temple and the Federal street church, in Boston. But since the erection of these, it is evident, that a rapid advance has been made in an acquaintance with the true principles of the Gothic style. We are satisfied of this, when we see such edifices as Christ church, Brooklyn, and the new Trinity church in New York, rising, in almost mediæval grandeur, upon our western shores. It is truly gratifying to perceive such substantial evidences of the wealth, the taste, and the piety of a people. We trust that, before many years have elapsed, we shall see among us more churches like these, which are, indeed, truly worthy of the name.

We gladly take the present opportunity to confess, as we

have done on a previous occasion, the strongest predilection for this glorious style. It is consecrated by the most intimate connexion with the origin and progress of our faith. By those who have made themselves most thoroughly acquainted with its principles, it is even denominated the *Christian* style, in contradistinction to all the others, which had their origin in the darkness of remote and heathen antiquity. In their form, their construction, and their detail, its edifices are strikingly emblematical of the doctrines of Christianity. It is impossible, then, that they should not, by the force of association, exert a very powerful influence over the mind which is disposed to be assisted by them. It is observed by Mr. Dowson, in his elegant "Essay on the Metaphysics of Architecture," that "the scenes around us become, as it were, the pedestals, upon which our souls naturally exalt themselves to take a view of the things beyond." This kind of association can nowhere be more necessary than in a house of worship. From music, poetry, painting, or sculpture, we can easily escape, if they cause impressions which are inharmonious or unpleasing; but it is impossible to avoid the impressions received from sacred architecture, unless we also banish ourselves from the ordinances of divine service, and habitually turn away our feet from the appointed exercises of religious worship. Every thing, therefore, which can contribute toward detaching the affections from the common and ordinary affairs of life, should be brought before the eye in a religious edifice; and it must be admitted that the solemn Gothic is admirably adapted for this purpose. There are few, indeed, who can withstand its impressive influence, or fail to be affected with the serious emotions it at once excites in the mind. For ourselves, we cannot desire that kind of satisfaction, which some have endeavoured to derive from a denial of these truths. "Far from me and my friends," said the wise and pious Dr. Johnson, "be such frigid philosophy! That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

In looking back over the history of Christianity, the events which mark its progress, and the great principles which it has continually kept alive, seem to us to be indelibly associated with the solemn edifices in which, from time to time, they have been either acted, or proclaimed. So long as these

invaluable monuments remain, they must always be viewed with the highest interest, and approached only with a feeling of reverent admiration. Mr. Pugin has very ingeniously endeavoured to show, that it is in them alone, that the great *æsthetical* principles of building have been fully carried out. Without venturing to question the correctness of this position, or to examine the numerous reasons which he has adduced in its support, we may remark, that many of the imitators in ecclesiastical architecture have certainly proceeded upon very erroneous principles in the formation of their designs. It is little to be wondered at, that many of our Gothic churches and other edifices are so unsatisfactory, when we observe, how different their designs are from those of the Gothic architects themselves, whose works are proposed as models for imitation. The fact, that at least six different stages or styles are clearly recognized in pointed architecture, — each one distinguished from the rest by peculiarities that are not to be mistaken, — has very often been lost sight of by our builders; while the adoption of any species of pointed arched windows, with rude imitations of embattled parapets, and sometimes a few buttress-like projections from the walls, has been dignified among us with the honorable title of a Gothic design. It is true, that a better and more rational manner is now beginning to prevail, as the copious and elegant illustrations of its finest examples are more closely studied. But such solecisms as are observable in some of our earlier works of the kind would not have been committed by persons acquainted even with the leading principles of the pointed style, since the marked changes which it successively underwent can be easily understood by a reference to the history of the circumstances which occasioned them. There is no doubt, that the successive steps in this gradual transition are very clearly defined.

A few churches had been constructed during the early period in which the Romans still retained possession of Britain. The progress of Christianity upon that uncivilized soil was slow and difficult, and its struggles under the Dioclesian persecution, and under the wild irruption of the Northern barbarians, produced a perceptible effect upon the sacred architecture of the fourth and fifth centuries. In the rude strife and turmoil of those primitive times, when the Roman legions had been recalled by the tottering state from the charge of con-

quests which she was no longer able to maintain, and civil disorder on all sides was at its height, the shrines of the new religion were almost entirely demolished, and their worshippers, as a body, scattered and lost in the paganism which rose upon their ruins. But when, at the end of the sixth century, the zeal of Augustine and Mellitus had rekindled the extinguished flame, and Christianity was again preached and propagated among the people, the new converts were assisted, in erecting their churches, by architects and workmen from the Papal city. Many of the Roman temples, and of the basilicas, or halls of justice, which still remained in existence, though in a neglected and dismantled condition, were repaired and consecrated to the services of the church. It is confidently believed, that the internal arrangement of these edifices was still retained, and first gave a form to the interior of all the religious structures which succeeded them. We find, that they were divided, by rows of columns, into three longitudinal spaces, like the nave and aisles of a church, and that the *apsis*, or semi-circular east end, still observable in some of the venerable Norman churches, had its distinct prototype in the recessed seats of the civil tribunal. The round arches, which, in the debased Roman buildings, sprung immediately from the imposts of the low and massive columns, and by their inelegance marked the decline of the last stage of Roman art, were copied with little alteration into these rude ecclesiastical structures, while the whole style of detail was left almost entirely devoid of ornamental finish. But in the subsequent invasions of the fierce Danes, it was their fate to meet with another almost general destruction, so that the number of churches, which can with any certainty be referred to the period of the Heptarchy, is, in fact, very small. Before the subject of ecclesiastical antiquities, however, had become of such general interest as at present, and when such an accurate knowledge of its history and principles as we now possess had not been acquired, nor even sought for, a very confused notion of its early state had arisen, from the indiscriminate application of the term "Saxon" to almost every edifice, in which the form of the pointed arch was not distinctly exhibited. This erroneous idea is still very frequently entertained; but the truth is, that the remains of Saxon architecture are now so inconsiderable, that its peculiarities could scarcely be illustrated by a reference to the



whole of them. The masonry is stated to be chiefly composed of rubble, with squared blocks of stone at the angles, and to have differed little in appearance from the latest specimens of the debased Roman manner of building.

But during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the doctrines of Christianity had obtained a firmer foothold, and the edifices in which its worship was conducted had become the objects of general veneration and respect. Many more churches were erected, which, in size and style, far excelled the rude structures of the preceding age. Of these Norman buildings, there are many still remaining, in a state of excellent preservation. Parts of the older cathedrals are referable to this period, and the thick walls, massive piers, and heavy, semicircular arches of Winchester, Rochester, Norwich, and Durham, still seem likely to retain their stable solidity to the end of time. In their external appearance, the structures of this period are rather uniform and monotonous, and, though in the larger examples, different tiers or stories of arches were generally introduced, the buildings in which they appear are entirely devoid of any lightness or elegance of design. The few buttresses which project from the walls are plain and shallow, and seem, as observed by Mr. Bloxam, "intended rather to relieve the plain external surface of the wall than to strengthen it." But between the earlier and later examples, it must be allowed that a marked difference is observable,—and the introduction of clustered columns, larger windows, and a profusion of enriched mouldings, appears to have gradually led the way to that lightness and elegance, which at once resulted from the discovery of the pointed arch. At the commencement of the thirteenth century, it had come into almost universal use, and the whole character of the style submitted to a consequent change.

The style of the thirteenth century is that which appears best fitted for our imitation. In its general character, it is light and simple; and though all superfluous ornament is carefully avoided, it may be observed, that in no style is a proper management of the details more indispensable than in this. When judiciously applied, and properly executed, they constitute one of its chief beauties. But as experience has abundantly proved, it is quite possible so to vulgarize their forms, and mistake their application, as to render them offensive excrescences, rather than ornamental enrichments.

Every effort should, therefore, be made, whenever this style is adopted, to preserve a harmonious consistency throughout. The roof should rise with an acute pitch, scarcely less than forty-five degrees, and all the dressings of the windows and doors, the pinnacles, buttresses, string-courses, and water tables, should be selected with the greatest care from the best examples *of the period*. If these be neglected, as they often have been, the experienced eye will be dissatisfied, and the well-meaning architect will suffer rather than profit by a critical investigation.

So little, however, has this unity of style been attended to in this country, that every liberal lover of the arts cannot but perceive, that a very loose idea, as well of plan as of decoration, has been encouraged in some of those meagre and miserable Gothic edifices, which, it is to be hoped, have already had their day. We have seen, for instance, the low, flat ceilings, the four centred arches, and the lighter shrine-work of the Tudor period, brought by our builders into the same design with the square piers, lancet windows, and peculiarly distinctive mouldings of the early English and the Decorated styles, — absurdities which are a source of great annoyance to every person of sound judgment and cultivated taste. For the first idea to be learned from the books is this, — that an incongruous intermingling of the manner of one century with that of another, is a total violation of architectural propriety, contrary to all the real principles of design, and, in the view of all who have studied the subject, totally destructive to the general effect. These

“jarring seeds of ill-concerted things”

are peculiarly obnoxious in an early English building, the effect of which results much more from its form and outline, than from the introduction of any adventitious details.

The east end of Ely cathedral, the fine minster at Southwell, the Temple church in London, and parts of Westminster abbey, of Salisbury, Wells, and Lincoln cathedrals, exhibit fine examples of this style. There are, also, many collegiate and parish churches, which are the work of the same period ; and an abundant series of studies will be found in Pugin's “Specimens,” in Mr. Britton's “Cathedrals,” and in the “Chronological Dictionary,” by the same author.

Whenever stained glass can be introduced in the windows

of a Gothic edifice, it imparts an air of splendid solemnity, which can be attained in no other way. Human invention could not add another feature so imposing as this to the dignity of the sacred structure, and few of the finer examples among the ancient buildings were wanting in all the attractions which it could be made to produce.

“Color and form alike their powers engage  
In trophies of the proud baronial age;  
Azure and crimson, green and gold unite;  
Friezes and chapters, in glory dight,  
Blaze with imposing splendor o’er the sight.  
Enamelled flowers their graceful foliage twine,  
And pictured mouldings thread the golden vine;  
Fair in their form, and glorious in their hue,  
They blend harmonious, and the mind subdue.” — *Edmeston.*

The Decorated style commenced about the beginning, and continued nearly to the close, of the next century. It chiefly flourished during the reigns of Edward the Second and Edward the Third, “in the latter of which,” says Mr. Bloxam, “it attained a degree of perfection unequalled by preceding or subsequent ages.” There is a greater redundancy of chaste ornament in this than any other style, and it has, with great propriety, been generally considered by the critics as the most beautiful style of English architecture, not exhibiting the daring flights of constructive talent so much as the next period, but certainly reaching the *acme* of beauty in design. Some of the essays of our own builders in the Gothic style have been made in professed imitation of this period, not unmixed, however, with a bad attempt at the features of all the rest. We fear that the antiquaries of a future age will be sadly confused in referring these buildings to their proper date, by a comparison of the distinctive points which they exhibit. In this way, indeed, the date of the structures of antiquity is determined, but it will scarcely hold good when we come to the consideration of our own.

The Masonic temple, which was the first Gothic structure of any pretension in Boston, has before been noticed at such length in this Journal,\* that it is unnecessary to do more than allude to it at present. We are glad, however, to be thus relieved from going into a full analysis of its claims, which, we are assured, would be no very pleasing

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\* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLIII., p. 364.

task to our readers or ourselves. Not much more favorable is our idea of the new Library at Cambridge. It is another unfortunate instance of unsupported pretension. The longer arm of the cross, did it stand alone, would be too low, flat, and heavy to produce any agreeable or consistent impression. But in addition to this, the architect has very injudiciously added transepts, extending laterally to such a distance as to aggravate this defect, and effectually to destroy the vertical proportions of the edifice. There is nothing light or spiry in the whole composition, and when we recollect that it has been extolled as "presenting a favorable specimen of the ecclesiastical style of the fourteenth century," we shall consider this defect as a very serious objection to the validity of so high a claim. The material of which it is built is scarcely suited to this style. It is of so hard and unyielding a texture, that it is worked with great difficulty, and could not be brought into the pliant forms of decorative detail, unless at a very great expense. Nor do we believe that, when thus elaborated, it would produce the intended result. The mouldings of this period are undercut, and present that infinite variety of light and shade, which can only arise from the aerial tints being most carefully studied. But the more this material is hammered and brought to a smooth surface, the stiffer becomes its effect; because the parts cut are rendered lighter, instead of darker, than the natural surface, as split from the quarry, and the intended effect of relief and shadow is thus counteracted and lost. The chocolate colored free-stone of Connecticut and New Jersey is a far better material, being much softer and darker than granite; and it is with great pleasure that we have learned, that it is intended to make use of this stone in the construction of a new church in Hanover street. If a chapel is to be erected at Mount Auburn, it should be of this material, and no other. We shall then have an opportunity to compare the glaring uniformity of the one with the shadowy repose of the other; and when these different results are fairly brought into contrast, we have some room to hope for the future adoption of the better and cheaper material. The monastic architects were too wise to waste their time and labor upon an unsuitable stone, and, dissatisfied in many instances with that which England afforded, they crossed the British Channel, and brought the rich Caen stone from the shores of Normandy to

their workmen at Canterbury and Westminster. Communication among us is now so rapid, cheap, and easy, that little excuse should be conceded to our architects for an oversight in this important particular.

The details of this building, so far as it has any, are decidedly displeasing. The ends of the transepts, in particular, are very offensive, being made up of slight buttresses and large trefoil windows, thrown together *en applique*, effectually disturbing the uniformity of the longitudinal perspective, and causing a want of harmony, rather than an effect of variety and proper distribution. We have repeatedly looked at it in vain, to discover any beauty in its whole conception. The architect has evidently been playing with an edge tool, that has sadly wounded his inexperienced fingers. We believe we are correct in saying, that the general opinion respecting his performance, among persons of taste, is far from being favorable.

Worse and worse, for the credit of Boston, is the nondescript pile of stone in Bowdoin square. It occupies a fine situation, which ought to have been well improved. But we cannot so far rely upon our powers of moderation as to proceed with a specific *critique*. We only think with Candidus, in his note-book, that "it is the consummation of all that is beggarly and miserable, and I think, that, if the architect had any spirit, he would have hanged himself as soon as it was completed." How is it possible, that such a structure as this can be planned and erected by a professional man, at a time when our public and private libraries contain so many lucid works on the subject of the Gothic style? It must be, that the more opportunity such a person possesses, the less he troubles himself to comprehend. Dr. Southey speaks of an admirable print among George Withers's emblems, having for its motto, "*Cæcus nil luce juvatur*." It represents an owl, standing in broad sunshine, with a pair of spectacles on his beak, a lighted candle on each side of him, and a blazing torch in each claw; and the more light there is, the less is the owl able to see. No happier emblem, we think, could be imagined to typify that school of builders, who rear such enduring evidences of their powers of observation. The spirit of the pointed style requires the intensest study, and can never be acquired without a great degree of *con amore* application. A great Gothic building is a glorious

epic, and he who cannot see poetry in the aisles of York minster would be sorely puzzled to find any in "Paradise Lost"; but it requires, in either case, some degree of taste to appreciate these beauties, and some study to understand them. Tried by this balance, how many of our builders will be found wanting?

Trinity church, in Boston, is the largest Gothic structure in the city, and where all are so bad, this, in some respects, must be allowed to be the best. "In this world," says Sir William Temple, "whatever is called good, is so comparatively with other things of this kind." We are surprised, whenever we enter it, that the interior should be so imposing as it is, and that it produces something akin to a very good effect, while nearly all the details are so objectionable. The piers are too slight, the galleries too heavy, the chancel too small, the nave too wide, and the roof too low. The tone of color, however, is well chosen, and, were less light admitted, would be still more effective. But the organ and organ-loft are perfectly exquisite; they were designed, and the former executed, in England, and were placed in their present position about six years ago. We do not believe there is, at present, another so fine a piece of Gothic panelling and tracery in America. A very great improvement has recently been effected in this church, by dismissing the pulpit and desk from the chancel, where they should never have been placed, and erecting others of a more appropriate form in the space in front of the altar railing. The chancel has also been enriched with additional decoration, and a fine mural tablet in *alto-relievo*, to the memory of the late Bishop Griswold, is now in the hands of the able sculptor, Mr. Brackett, intended to be placed between the two large windows at the east corner of the southern aisle. Whatever this interior now possesses of pleasing effect has been acquired since the time when some allusion was made to it in this Journal, and is entirely due to subsequent alterations and decorations. These have been so thoroughly carried out, that the church presents a very different, and certainly a much improved, appearance. But there is still a great *weakness* throughout the whole, arising from defects which are inherent in the construction of the building, and can never be got rid of in any other way than by a total renovation of the whole design.

The inertness and inanity of this building very well illustrate a point upon which we had determined to speak. They afford a fair example of the mischief which is done by interfering with the completeness of an architect's intentions, and pruning away, as useless expenditures, all the vitals of his design. Many fine and sensible conceptions have thus been ruined in the outset. Had intermeddling committeemen kept their hands off from what they were fitted, neither by nature nor by education, to comprehend, far less to control, — so many of our most expensive public buildings would not be disfigured by the crudities which they now present. The faults which strike us so disagreeably in this edifice are, to our knowledge, by no means attributable to the architect ; they were forced upon him by "the Committee," that inexorable tribunal of taste, from whose authoritative decision there is no hope of appeal. The low, deformed story which terminates the tower, with its enlarged *quatrefoil* openings, and its flimsy battlement, it can well be imagined, formed no part of the original design. The same is true of the weak clusters of columns that support the galleries, and of the anomalous ceiling, that, were it really of stone, as it now assumes to be, would either depend for support upon some secret principles of construction as yet unknown to geometrical science, or else adopt the only disagreeable alternative allowed to it by the laws of gravitation, and perhaps immure a devout, attentive, and unsuspecting congregation under its rubbish. Upon any recognized principles of the arch, it would not stand for an instant. So long, however, as it was evidently lath and plaster, and therefore easily known to be supported from the roof behind, it did not appear dangerous, or perhaps we should say, *impossible*. But now that the skill of the decorative artist has been called in, to give to it the semblance of a stone vaulting, and the deceptive appearance of the different courses is so well carried out as, in many instances, to impose upon the eye, it becomes evident, at the same time, to the most careless spectator, that a vault, so constructed, could be kept in its place by nothing short of a direct miracle.

" More might be said of this to give a proof,  
But more to say were more than is enough."

The design of an architect should be strictly consistent

and uniform in all its parts. How often this standard of excellence is really arrived at, even in the portfolio, it would perhaps be difficult to ascertain ; but it is certainly incumbent upon those who have the ostensible direction of his movements, if they cannot assist him, at least to refrain from tying his hands. If, indeed, it be right

“ to compare  
Small things with greatest,”

we shall do them a service by repeating Dr. South's pithy observation, that “ the knowledge of what ought and what ought not to be done, is a thing too large to be compassed, and too hard to be mastered, without brains and study, parts and contemplation.” It is not to be supposed, that they are fit to take the direction of that which they have never studied, or of which they have, at best, but a very imperfect idea. General instructions, therefore, in the outset, are all that should ever be issued. A statement of the intended form and extent of the edifice, of the style to be employed, and of the limit of expense, are instructions enough ; the architect then goes properly and safely to work, and can easily bring his project within the limit which is prescribed. But when his drawings are completed, he should never submit to have them pared down or altered by an ambitious, a whimsical, or a penurious committee of taste. We have known an instance, where, after a Grecian design had been procured from an architect of acknowledged respectability, one of the committee-men peremptorily insisted on the introduction of *pointed windows*, giving it to be understood, that he had quite made up his mind to that item, at least, and that he had come into the commission with a full determination to use his whole influence in favor of what he esteemed the handsomest form a window could be made to assume. The entablature of the Ionic portico was accordingly divided, over the central intercolumn, the pillars were set back, and engaged in the wall, and a huge, equilateral arched window filled up the whole centre of the front, rose through the gap in the horizontal entablature, and finished in a point under the apex of the pediment above it. The church where this was done is now to be seen within twenty miles of Boston.

These are only a few of the absurdities which are introduced by ignorance in authority. The architect who has a real interest in his profession, and who does not follow it



only for the income it affords, should prepare himself to encounter these difficulties, and endeavour, by persuasion and argument, to remove them. It is only by taking this high stand, that he can aid in establishing the dignity of the body to which he belongs. If he fail of success in his attempts to convince, and finds that he is to be overruled in essential points, we are clearly of opinion, that he is bound in honor and conscience to withdraw. And though these obstacles must always continue, in some degree, to occur, —

“They might be met with ease, by a determination on the part of professional men to give no assistance whatever, beyond the mere superintendence of construction, unless they be permitted to take the whole design into their own hands, merely receiving broad instructions respecting the style, (and not attending to them unless they like.) They should not make out the smallest detail, unless they were answerable for the whole. In this case, gentlemen architects would be thrown so utterly on their own resources, that, unless those resources were adequate, they would be obliged to surrender the task into more practised hands; and, if they were adequate, if the amateur had paid so much attention to the art as to be capable of giving the design perfectly, it is probable he would not erect any thing strikingly abominable.” — *Architect. Mag.*, Vol. IV.

While, then, we are aware that this state of things actually exists, and have thus allowed our acquaintance with the facts, it will perhaps be deemed partial and unfair in us to lay the faults of our architecture, in the first instance, upon its professors. Did we form our judgment from the appearance of executed buildings alone, there would be a strong color of truth in the objection. Swift somewhere intimates, that “what a man is forced to, is no diminution of his wisdom.” But if we look for a moment at the published designs of architects, — where no such control as that of which we have spoken has ever existed, or could exist, — the result will not be very different from that at which we have already arrived.

It is understood, that Mr. Shaw, the author of the book which stands at the head of this article, has written and published several works upon subjects connected with the profession of architecture. We have no doubt, that he can draw the contract and indite the specifications for carpenters’ and masons’ operations, as well as any of his professional

compeers. But it should be recollected; that this is but a very small part of the various learning which an architect is expected, and bound, to possess. We do not see, in the work before us, any evidence of much greater ability. The author appears to be one of those old fashioned five-order men, who have grown antic in the decline of their favorite system, and have endeavoured, by a vigorous push, to accommodate themselves to the surprising achievements of their later and more successful rivals. But the principle remains the same, though its manifestation is somewhat changed; and it is not hard to perceive, that he has merely discarded Vitruvius for Benjamin, and Sir William Chambers' "Treatise" for "The Builder's Guide." We are accordingly presented with *Doric cottages* and Ionic and Corinthian dwelling-houses in plenty; the Grecian detail is faultlessly exact, and, no doubt, minutely transcribed from Stuart; but it is only the skin of the lion on the body of the ass. The parts are grouped into grotesque and heterogeneous forms, and fitted together as a child fits the pieces of a wooden puzzle. The combinations presented are senseless, inanimate, and rigid, — mere unmeaning form, without one particle of life-giving spirit; and the highest praise that can be given them is, that they are purely Grecian, as that term is now understood. They are likely to satisfy the highest aspirations of all admirers of "classic dwellings," and to their patronage we specially recommend them. They exhibit a fair example of the happy effect produced by treating an Athenian temple as a dwelling-house for an American family; and we would refer to plates 9 and 10, in particular, exhibiting a Doric temple with an attic story, as the very *beau-ideal* of this species of combination. For originality in the invention of ugliness, it may safely stand without a parallel.

Of Gothic architecture, of the power and greatness of talent displayed in the ecclesiastical structures of the Old World, of the noble conceptions of beauty in their design, and of the almost incredible mechanical skill evinced in their construction, Mr. Shaw has, evidently, about as adequate an idea as any quadruped whose name could be selected from the extensive nomenclature of modern zoölogy. If any thing can go beyond his "Gothic churches," let it be produced, and we will hold our breath while we look on. We cannot

look at the odd havoc and intermixture they exhibit, without exclaiming with the waggish Petruccio,

“What! up and down, carv’d like an apple tart?  
Here’s snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and slash,  
Like to a censer in a barber’s shop:  
Why! what, o’ devil’s name, tailor, call’st thou this?”

But here, there is perhaps less necessity for remark. The Doric cottages, the Corinthian villas, may be copied, and probably will be, for there is no doubt that they are sufficiently expensive and sufficiently absurd to be at once considered very tasteful; but it is scarcely possible, that any individual can be so misguided as to entertain any predilection for Mr. Shaw’s Gothic. We leave the plates, therefore, to speak for themselves, (plates 51 and 52), merely remarking, however, upon the estimate given in the description which is appended to the latter, that “five hundred persons can be seated with comfort” in the building which it represents, — that such comfortable persons must have very little real perception of beauty in theory, and still less regard for it in practice. As a church for the *blind*, it would doubtless answer as well as any other.

Our limits prevent us from noticing two very excellent churches at Hartford as fully as their merit deserves. We must pass to a rapid notice of the magnificent church, now erecting in the city of New-York, with which we must close our already protracted article. Trinity church stands in Broadway, opposite the head of Wall street, on the site of the old building of that name, a flimsy edifice erected in 1788. The former church presented no great beauty of appearance, and, upon an examination with a view to extensive repairs, was found to be so much decayed, that it was at once decided to take it down, and erect a new structure more worthy of the increased wealth of the parish, and of the high position which it occupies, as the oldest Episcopal establishment in the commercial metropolis of America. A design having been prepared by the able architect, Mr. Upjohn, it was accepted by the vestry, and the works were soon commenced. The body of the church is now nearly completed. In size, in the delicacy and propriety of its decoration, and in the beauty of its general effect, we are inclined to think, that it surpasses any church erected in England since the revival of the pointed style. The new

church of St. Luke, Chelsea, from the designs of Mr. Savage, minutely illustrated in Mr. Britton's descriptions and plates, will bear no comparison with the catholic propriety and finished elegance of this American structure. Governed by simple and consistent principles, the architect has conceived and finished it in the true and delicate spirit of the chastest period. It rivals the accurate taste of the best works of the fourteenth century, and is carried out upon a scale which we had deemed it impossible to adopt, in a country where architecture is in so chaotic a state. With the single exception of the guild chapels and private chantries introduced by Mr. Pugin in his engraving of a perfect church, it very nearly resembles that enthusiastic ideal of an ecclesiastical edifice of the Middle Ages.

The extreme length of this superb structure is 192 feet. The tower and spire, which rise with an airy grandeur resembling that of the celebrated church of Louth in Lincolnshire, are terminated by a rich crosslet, at the height of 264 feet from the ground. The width of the nave, between the columns, is 37 feet, and the width of the church, in the clear, including the aisles, is 84 feet. There are nine equilateral arched windows on each side of the nave, corresponding in their position to the interior spaces between the piers. The *clerestory* is unusually lofty, and from its numerous openings will pour down a flood of checkered light upon the marble pavement below. The great window at the end of the chancel is the largest in the building, being 28 feet wide, and 44 feet high. It has fourteen principal compartments, which are to be filled with painted glass, representing the twelve apostles, with the Virgin and child. Under this window stands the altar; the pulpit is designed to be placed against one of the large columns, about half way down the nave. The organ is to be placed on a highly sculptured stone screen, over the entrance from the tower to the nave. The pews will be of black walnut, with characteristic paneling and *finials*, and are to occupy the nave only. The entire cost of the edifice will be over \$500,000.

We are happy to perceive, by a print of this church recently published, that the spire has been more highly enriched than in the original design. Had it been erected in so plain a style as was at first proposed, it would have been a defect, which, in our eyes, would have ruined the whole building.

A light and highly decorated tower, surmounted by a plain, naked, and heavy spire, without any crocketing, foliated bands, or canopied windows in its sides, would have appeared so distressing a deformity, that we should infinitely have preferred, that the first stone of the structure had never been laid. If a diminution of expense were the object, it would be far better that the spire should remain unfinished ten, twenty, or even fifty years, rather than be completed in a slovenly and inappropriate manner.

In expressing the opinions which have now been given to our readers, a choice seemed to be presented us between the mere assertion of general principles, with observations upon their general manifestation, and an explicit statement of real and tangible facts, illustrated by direct references to well known examples. We have adopted the latter course, as being more pointed and forcible, and therefore more likely to create the intended impression. We think it a subject, not only of private interest, but of great public importance. We have not yet advanced to that length in architecture, that a treatise upon the *metaphysics* of the art is so much called for, as a little searching and vigorous criticism upon existing faults. But whenever we have found it possible to connect general principles with the illustration of our positions, it will be observed, that we have not scrupled to do so ; and if these should be found, in some degree, a repetition of the arguments of others, it will, at least, be recollected, that it is impossible to originate a new grammar of the arts, and that, upon this subject, we shall always prefer the merit of sound and acknowledged opinions, to the poor praise of originality. And if it should appear to some, that we have been harsh in our strictures upon the prevailing system of the day, we may hope for pardon from every one who wishes to see the character of our architecture elevated, and its professors raised from the level of mere mercenary draughtsmen, to be honored as members of an elegant and liberal profession, and taking their stand, side by side, with the highest artists of the country. So long, however, as the present system of building continues to be followed, there is little hope of so desirable a consummation. But when an architect shall arise, gifted with a real love for his art, and with a true perception of whatever in it is beautiful and noble, — who shall add to the advantages of thorough education the

sound and delicate sense of propriety that is only to be acquired from habits of careful observation, — with too much regard for the excellences of classic art to feel any wish to degrade them, and too just an appreciation of what is suited to the uses of his own time to leave it any longer in total neglect, — we may begin to cherish a hope for the revival of a true taste in the community, and may look forward with an increased confidence to a brighter period in the history of *American Architecture*.

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- ART. VII. — 1. *The Bondmaid*, by FREDRIKA BREMER. Translated from the Swedish, by M. L. PUTNAM. Boston : James Munroe & Co. 16mo. pp. 112.
2. *New Sketches of Every-day Life : A Diary* ; together with *Strife and Peace*. By FREDRIKA BREMER. Translated by MARY HOWITT. New York : Harper & Brothers. 1844. Price One Shilling.
3. *Strife and Peace, or Scenes in Norway*. By FREDRIKA BREMER. Translated from the Swedish. Boston : James Munroe & Co. 1843.

EVER since, in our childhood, we caught some faint echoes of those wild sagas, which seemed to clang with the thunders of Thor's hammer, or of the scarcely less terrible swords of the Berserkirs ; since we heard in fancy the prows of the Vikings grating upon the strands of Western and Southern Europe, from Britain to Byzantium, or ploughing through the hitherto untracked waters of our own Massachusetts Bay to the forest-crowned shores of Vinland ; since our young hearts throbbed exultingly over the story of the exploits of the heroic and wise Gustavus Wasa ; since we hung with breathless delight over the narrative of the achievements of that Great Captain, " the lion of the North," made yet more dear to us as the companion in arms of the stalwart Dalgetty ; or followed with admiring interest the bloody footsteps of Charles the Twelfth, in whom the classic marauder and the Viking seem to have mingled to produce a rarer and more murderous madman, — we have felt a kind of vague awe of that mysterious Scandinavia, to which we